

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

A Request for Continuing Examination has been filed in this Application in view of the Final Office Action mailed on August 5, 2004. Claims 1-17 and 20-29 are presently active in this Application, Claims 1-17 and 19 stand rejected, and Claim 18 has been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 4, 9, and 12 are amended, Claims 18 and 19 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 20-29 are added by the present amendment.

Summarizing the outstanding Final Office Action, Claims 4-6 and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Claims 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Daikuhara (U.S. Patent No. 6,402,368, hereinafter "Daikuhara"). Claims 3, 8, 11, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daikuhara in view of Azuma (JP 10-220480, hereinafter "Azuma").

Applicants thank Examiners Van Pelt and David Bucci for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicants' representative on September 8, 2004. During the interview, amendments to the claims as herein presented were proposed, and arguments as hereinafter developed were presented.

As to the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112, Applicants' representative explained the cylindrical coordinate system used to described the claimed inventions. In addition, in contrast to the teachings of Daikuhara and Azuma, the novel and non-obvious features and orientation of the lubricant outlets of the instant inventions were explained. As to the structure of the lubricant outlet, it was explained that (1) the outlet of the present invention opens to the same side as the chambers in the cage and (2) the outlets of lubricants in both

Daikuhara and Azuma are not disposed on an outer wall of the storage space from an edge portion of an opening of the substantially closed storage space. Finally, as disclosed in Applicants' specification,¹ neither Daikuhara nor Azuma disclose a substantially closed space in communication with a chamber via a conduit.²

Examiner Bucci indicated on the interview summary (form PTOL- 413) that "Applicant's representative argued the 112 2nd ¶ rejections. The examiner agreed to withdraw those rejections, however, the subject matter of claim 5 is not illustrated in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). It was agreed that the claims should be further amended to more specifically recite the orientation of the opening 26 or the orientation of the outlets 30 to define over the prior art of record. Such further limitations would require a further search. Applicant to respond in due course."

Based at least on the foregoing discussion and the results of the personal interview, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 9 to recite that the opening of the substantially closed storage space for lubricant is oriented substantially along the axis of rotation on the same side of the cage as the openings of the two chambers. New independent Claims 20 and 28 recite, among other features, an outlet disposed on the outer wall from an edge portion of the opening of the substantially closed storage space. Finally, New independent Claim 29 recites, among other features, the conduits for the transport of lubricant from the substantially closed space to the chambers of the cage, as illustrated by way of a non-limiting example, in Applicants' FIG. 3. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-summarized rejections are now moot. Their withdrawal is respectfully requested.

During the personal interview the drawings were objected under 37 C.F.R. §1.8(a). Although only Claim 5 was noted in the interview summary, Examiner Van Pelt also verbally

¹ See, for example, Specification, pages 6 and 7, paragraphs 28 and 29.

² "A natural or artificial channel through which something (as a fluid) is conveyed" Webster-Meridian Dictionary online.

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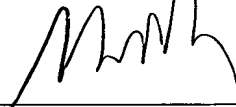
objected to Claim 19 under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). In response, Applicants have canceled Claim 19 and submitted a new drawing sheet illustrating the features of the invention recited in Claim 5 and respectfully request reconsideration of the objection thereto. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to the above-referenced application by the replacement drawings submitted.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-17 and 20-29 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representatives at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings adds new FIG. 4.

Attachment: New Sheets (1)